



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DMV Warns of Private-Sale Used Vehicles with Undisclosed Flood Damage

Montpelier, Vt. – The Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) reminds Vermonters to be on the look out for flood damage when purchasing used vehicles in private sales. After the recent flooding, consumers should take precautions in coming weeks and months to avoid unintentionally purchasing vehicles that were damaged by flooding.

Some private sellers take a vehicle from a flooded area and get a new title in a different state before trying to sell it. Consumers should be aware when purchasing used vehicles with titles issued during storm periods that they could be flood vehicles, even if the title is not from a state affected by the storm.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration advises consumers to be aware during private sales. On first appearance, the vehicle may look fine. If the seller is using a fraudulent title, it may be even more difficult to determine whether the vehicle is flood-damaged. Flood damage can affect a vehicle's mechanisms for years to come and may not always manifest as a problem right away. Flood damage can affect the engine or transmission, corrode wiring, harm the airbag, and impair the vehicle's computers, which may not be immediately visible.

The [National Insurance Crime Bureau's \(NICB\) VINCheck](#) is a free service to help consumers determine if a vehicle has been reported as salvaged or stolen. By entering the Vehicle Identification Number of the vehicle they are considering buying, consumers can learn if the vehicle was ever flooded or stolen. A consumer may search as many as five VINs per day.

The NICB also offers a free brochure on its website with [tips on how to avoid post-disaster fraud](#).

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